

U.S. Census Bureau News

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Women's History Month: March 2006

In 1981, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution establishing National Women's History Week. The week was chosen to coincide with International Women's Day, March 8. In 1987, Congress expanded the week to a month. Every year since, Congress has passed a resolution for Women's History Month, and the U.S. president has issued a proclamation.

149.1 million

The number of females in the United States as of July 1, 2004. That exceeds the number of males (144.5 million). Males outnumbered females in every five-year-age group through the 35- to 39-age group. Starting with the 40- to 44-age group, women outnumbered men. At 85 and over, there were more than twice as many women as men.

[<http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2004-sa.html>](http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2004-sa.html)

Motherhood

82.5 million

Estimated number of mothers of all ages in the United States. (From unpublished data.)

1.9

Average number of children that women ages 40 to 44 had given birth to as of 2004, down from 3.1 children in 1976, the year the Census Bureau began collecting such data.

[<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/fertility.html>](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/fertility.html)

Education

31%

Percent of women ages 25 to 29 years who had attained a bachelor's degree or higher in 2004, which exceeded that of men in this age range (26 percent). Eighty-eight percent of women and 85 percent of men in this same age range had completed high school.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html)

85.4%

Percent of women age 25 and older who had completed high school as of 2004. High school graduation rates for women continued to exceed those of men (84.8 percent).

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html)

25.4 million

Number of women age 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or more education in 2004, more than double the number 20 years earlier.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html>>

26%

Percent of women age 25 years and over who had obtained a bachelor's degree as of 2004. This rate was up nearly 7 percentage points from a decade earlier.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/004214.html>>

845,000

The projected number of bachelor's degrees that will be awarded to women in the 2005-06 school year; women also are projected to earn 350,000 master's degrees during this period. Women would, therefore, earn 59 percent of the bachelor's and 60 percent of the master's degrees awarded during this school year. <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005074.pdf>> See tables 27 and 28.

Businesses

\$950.6 billion

Receipts for women-owned businesses in 2002, up 16 percent from 1997.

6.5 million

The number of women-owned businesses in 2002, up 20 percent from 1997. (The increase among all businesses was 10 percent.) An estimated 917,946 such firms had paid employees, with receipts of \$813 billion, or an average of \$885,878 per firm.

Over half of women-owned firms were in service-related industries, including health care and professional services. Receipts were generally highest for wholesale and retail trade activities.

43%

Rate of growth in the number of women-owned firms in Nevada between 1997 and 2002, which led the nation. New Hampshire, however, led the nation in the increase of sales and receipts of women-owned firms, at 53 percent.

Source for the above four statements:

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/business_ownership/005477.html>

26%

Among businesses with paid employees, the percentage of owners who were women.

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/business_ownership/003913.html>

Earnings

\$31,223

The median annual earnings of women ages 15 and older who worked full time, year-round in 2004. After adjusting for inflation, earnings for these women declined by 1 percent between 2003 and 2004.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html)

77 cents

The amount women age 15 and older, who worked full time, year-round, earned for every \$1 their male counterparts earned in 2004. This amount is up from 76 cents for every dollar in 2003.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html)

91 cents

The amount women in the District of Columbia, who worked full time, year-round, earned for every \$1 their male counterparts earned in 2004. D.C. led all states or state equivalents in this category.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html)

\$56,585

Median earnings of women working in computer and mathematical jobs, the highest for women among the 22 major occupational groups. Among these groups, women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings were about 90 percent or higher in installation, maintenance and repair; community and social services; construction and extraction (such as those drilling for oil); and healthcare support.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html)

Voting

65%

Percentage of women citizens who reported voting in the 2004 presidential election, higher than the 62 percent of their male counterparts who cast a ballot.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/voting/004986.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/voting/004986.html)

Jobs

59%

Percent of women 16 and older who participated in the labor force in 2004. Men in this age range had a participation rate of 73 percent. [<http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat2.pdf>](http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat2.pdf)

72 million

Number of women age 15 and older who worked in 2004. Of this number, 59 percent worked year-round, full time.

[<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html>](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/005647.html)

37%

Percent of women 16 and older who work in management, professional and related occupations, compared with 32 percent of men. (Source: American FactFinder)

20.4 million

Number of female workers in educational services and health care and social assistance industries. More women work in this industry group than in any other. (Source: American FactFinder)

Military

212,000

Total number of active duty women in the military, as of Sept. 30, 2004. Of that total, 35,100 women were officers and 177,000 were enlisted.

(Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*, Table 501.)

15%

Proportion of members of the armed forces who were women, as of Sept. 30, 2004. In 1950, women comprised fewer than 2 percent.

(Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*, Table 501.)

1.7 million

The number of military veterans who are women.

(Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*, Table 510.)

Marriage

63 million

Number of married women (including those who are separated or have an absent spouse). There are 54 million unmarried (widowed, divorced or never married) women.

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

53%

Percent of unmarried and single Americans who are women.

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

5.6 million

Number of stay-at-home mothers nationwide.

<<http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/shp1.pdf>>

Computers

84%

Proportion of women who used a computer at home in 2003, 2 percentage points higher than the corresponding proportion for men. This reverses the computer use “gender gap” exhibited during the 1980s and 1990s. Women’s Internet use at home also exceeded men’s (83 percent versus 81 percent). <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/miscellaneous/005863.html>>

Sports and Recreation

2.9 million

Number of females who participated in high school athletic programs in the 2003-04 school year. In the 1972-73 school year, only 817,073 females were members of a high school athletic team. (Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*, Table 1237.)

162,752

Number of women who participated in an NCAA sport in 2003-04. (Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*, Table 1239.)

83%

Among those who purchased aerobic shoes in 2003, the proportion who were women. Women also comprised a large majority (61 percent) of those who bought walking shoes. (Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*, Table 1242.)

57%

Percentage of women who participated in gardening at least once in the last 12 months, compared with 37 percent of men. Women were also much more likely than men to have done charity work (32 percent versus 26 percent), attended arts and crafts fairs (39 percent versus 27 percent) and read literature (55 percent versus 38 percent). (Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*, Tables 1226, 1227 and 1228.)

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau’s *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day (Sept. 4)
Valentine’s Day (Feb. 14)	Grandparents Day (Sept. 10)
Women’s History Month (March)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/	Halloween (Oct. 31)
St. Patrick’s Day (March 17)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	(November)
Older Americans Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Mother’s Day (May 14)	Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 23)
Father’s Day (June 18)	The Holiday Season (December)
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

Editor’s note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau’s Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.